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ABSTRACT

The author feels that one of the most significant contributions to English teaching in Mexico today is being rendered by the 14 American-Mexican and three Anglo-Mexican cultural relations institutes or "binational centers." These autonomous institutions receive the cooperation of agencies of the American and British governments and exert a "noteworthy influence" throughout the Republic of Mexico and even beyond into major portions of Spanish-speaking America. The present study describes these institutes as follows: (1) The Mexican American Binational Centers--an Overview, (2) The Mexican American Cultural Institute of Mexico City, and (3) The Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institutes. The author discusses courses, teacher training, aims and methods, materials, testing and grading, and data on students and teachers. (AMM)

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THE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMS OF THE AMERICAN AND BRITISH BINATIONAL INSTITUTES IN MEXICO

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THE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMS OF THE AMERICAN AND BRITISH BINATIONAL INSTITUTES IN MEXICO

As closest neighbor to the largest English-speaking nation in the world, Mexico finds itself perhaps more strongly motivated to emphasize the teaching of English than any other non-English-speaking country. Indeed, English is taught more widely in Spanish-speaking Mexico than any other foreign language. Its importance arises from its being the foremost channel of international communication in varied aspects: technological, commercial, scientific, and political as well as social and cultural.

One of the most significant contributions to English teaching in Mexico today is being rendered by the fourteen American-Mexican and three Anglo-Mexican cultural relations institutes or binational centers, as they are commonly called. These autonomous institutions receive the cooperation of agencies of the American and British governments. Their extensive English instructional programs exert a noteworthy influence throughout the republic of Mexico and even beyond into major portions of Spanish-speaking America.

This study describes these institutes as follows: (1) The Mexican American Binational Centers--an Overview, (2) The Mexican American Cultural Institute of Mexico City, and (3) The Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institutes.

I. THE MEXICAN AMERICAN BINATIONAL CENTERS-AN OVERVIEW

The fourteen Mexican American binational centers or cultural institutes are dedicated to fostering friendship and understanding between the peoples of Mexico and the United States. Their principal activity is teaching American English to Mexicans, primarily adults, in the belief that this is one of the most effective ways of bringing understanding and appreciation of the culture and civilization of the United States to Mexicans.

The centers are autonomous organizations, controlled by local boards of directors composed of Mexicans and Americans, and are loosely affiliated with one another and with similar cultural institutes throughout Latin America. Although largely self-supporting, they receive aid in varying degrees from the United States government through the United States Information Service, which has its main Mexican office in Mexico City and branch posts in Guadalajara, Monterrey, and Hermosillo.

Besides offering extensive English programs, the institutes sponsor lectures, concerts, art exhibits, and films; offer seminars and other services to Mexican English teachers; teach Spanish to Americans and other foreigners in Mexico; handle scholarship and fellowship programs for Mexicans planning to study in the United States; and organize clubs and social events, including appropriate ceremonies to observe major Mexican and American holidays. They also serve as a meeting place for local chapters of the Mexican Association of Teachers of English. Some of them maintain libraries with books and periodicals in both English and Spanish.

At the present time there are fourteen Mexican American binational centers distributed throughout the Mexican republic. The first and largest was established in Mexico City in 1947. Six additional institutes were founded during the decade of the fifties, most of them located in a broad

region surrounding the capital city: at Guadalajara, San Luis Potosí, Morelia, Monterrey, Veracruz, and Mérida. The remaining seven centers were set up in the decade of the sixties, most of them in the northern half of the country: at Chihuahua, Colima, Hermosillo, Monclova, Saltillo, Tampico, and Torreón.

The binational centers are classified by the United States Information Service according to the following three categories:

Category A -- The U.S.I.S. hires and pays the salary of the director of the center (and, in the case of the Guadalajara institute, the director of courses) and furnishes supplies, grants, and general assistance.

Category B -- The U.S.I.S. furnishes supplies, grants, and general assistance.

Category C -- The U.S.I.S. lends "moral support" and limited general assistance upon request.

The supplies furnished usually take the form of books, equipment, musical scores, and English as a second language materials. Cash grants may range from two hundred to seven thousand dollars and are designated for special projects, such as providing student scholarships, renovating a library, aiding cultural activities, paying for a visiting lecturer or singer, and setting up a program with a local university. Partial financial assistance is periodically offered to promote English teaching seminars as a service for binational center teachers as well as for teachers in the community. Although the "C" centers are generally not aided financially, the U.S.I.S. occasionally gives them books and a few small cash grants, usually for student scholarships.

The following table presents basic information concerning each of the fourteen centers, emphasizing the English teaching programs, which constitute the principal activity at each center. The abbreviation "IMNRC" re-

presents the most commonly used name: Instituto Mexicano Norteamericano de Relaciones Culturales.

U.S. Binational Centers in Mexico

Name and Address	Category	No. of Students	Tuition Fees	Textbooks Used	Ages of Students
IMNRC de Chihuahua Aldama 9 - 2° Piso Chihuahua, Chih.	B	775	180	A.E.C. 1-9 Intensive Course in Engl I (GEL)	16 above 4-12; 13-15
Instituto Cultural Mexicano Norteamericano de Jalisco Tolsa 300; Guadalajara, Jal.	A	1802	150	A.E.C. 4-8 English for Today	13 above
Instituto Mexicano Americano de Relaciones Culturales Edificio Sonora; Hermosillo, Son.	B	686	250	A.E.C. 1-9 Dixson Books	15 above 5-14
Instituto Benjamín Franklin de Yucatán Calle 57, No. 474-A; Mérida, Yuc.	A	1004	115	A.E.C. 1-9 Dixson & Bumpass	17 above 9-13; 13-17
IMNRC Hamburgo 115 Mexico 6, D.F.	B	11,033	200	A.E.C. 1-9 Adv. I-III	18 above 14-17
IMNRC de Monclova Hidalgo Sur 620 Monclova, Coahuila	C	350	230	A.E.C. 1-9 Adv. I-III	18 above 5-17
IMNRC de Nuevo Leon Hidalgo Pte. 768 Monterrey, N.L.	A	1300	165	A.E.C. 1-9 Adv. I-III et al.	11 above 5-10 (summer)
Instituto Cultural Mexicano Norteamericano de Michoacán Guillermo Prieto 86, Morelia, Mich.	A	873	150	A.E.C. 1-9	10 above
IMNRC de Saltillo Hidalgo Nte. 160 Saltillo, Coahuila	C	638	165	A.E.C. 1-9 Adv. I-III	15 above 8-12
IMNRC de San Luis Potosí Venustiano Carranza 766 San Luis Potosí, S.L.P.	A	1067	95	A.E.C. 1-9 Adv. I-III	15 above 7-10; 11-15
Centro Cultural México-Americano Calle Carranza 215 Pte. Tampico, Tamps.	C	985	175	A.E.C. 1-9	6 above
Instituto Franklin de Veracruz Azueta 1229 Esq. Díaz Mirón Veracruz, Ver.	B	1253	165	A.E.C. 1-9 Bumpass, Fries, Dixson	18 above 6-12; 13-17
Instituto Cultural Mexicano Norteamericano de Colima Hidalgo 93; Colima, Col.	C	255	150	A.E.C. 1-9	18 above
IMNRC de Torreón Torreón, Coahuila	C	958	190	A.E.C. 1-9	18 above 6-12; 13-17

Name and Location	No. of Teachers	% Native Engl. Speakers	Salary Range	Fringe Benefits	Courses beyond Basic 9	Teacher LL*	Training
IMNRC de Chihuahua Chihuahua, Chih.	16	60%	25.00 hr.	Bonus*	Conversation	X	1 wk. seminar
Instituto Cultural Mexicano Norteamericano de Jalisco Guadalajara, Jal.	30	50%	28 to 37.38 hr.	Bonus Sick Lv.	Four Adv.	X	2 wks. seminar
Instituto Mexicano Americano de Relaciones Culturales Hermosillo, Son.	8	25%	30 to 33.30	Bonus	One Adv.	0	2 hrs. semi-monthly; 1 wk. seminar
Instituto Benjamín Franklin de Yucatán Mérida, Yuc.	19	10%	15.00 hr.	2 Mo. pd. vacation	Two Adv.	0	Monthly work-shops
IMNRC Mexico, D.F.	54	90%	41.90 to 58.13 hr.	Bonus; pd. vac & sick lv.	Three Adv. & Adv. Conv.	X	Three courses; seminars
IMNRC de Monclova Monclova, Coahuila	8	50%	15 to 20.00 hr.		Three Adv. & Conversation	0	Teachers Course & Workshop
IMNRC de Nuevo León Monterrey, N.L.	28	25%	19.23 to 31.92 hr.	Bonus	Three Adv.	X	Three Courses & Seminar
Instituto Cultural Mexicano Norteamericano de Michoacán Morelia, Mich.	11	10%	24 to 34 hr.	None	One Adv.	0	One Course & Seminar
IMNRC de Saltillo Saltillo, Coahuila	12	50%	25.00 hr.	Bonus Pd. vac's	Three Adv.	0	Seminar
IMNRC de San Luis Potosí San Luis Potosí, S.L.P.	13	25%	16.50 hr.	None	Three Adv.	0	One Course; monthly workshop
Centro Cultural México-Americano Tampico, Tamps.	12	0%	25.00 hr.	None	None	0	Seminars
Instituto Franklin de Veracruz Veracruz, Ver.	22	4.5%	20 to 31.25 hr.	Sick Lv.	Two Adv.	0	One Course; 1 wk. seminar
Instituto Cultural Mexicano Norteamericano de Colima Colima, Col.	1	100%	?	None	None	0	None
IMNRC de Torreón Torreón, Coahuila	12	?	?	?	?		

(*Bonus: 12% at end of year)

(*LL: Language Laboratory)

It is interesting to note that all of the centers have patterned their adult English courses according to the basic nine textbooks of the American English Course, originally published in 1957-1958 and revised in 1959-1960 by the Mexican American Cultural Institute in Mexico City, which distributes its books to the other centers. There is one exception: the Guadalajara institute is gradually transforming its program and adopting the English for Today textbook series (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1962, 1965) to replace the American English Course books on a step-by-step basis. All institutes profess the so-called "oral approach" of the Mexico City center although the Guadalajara Institute is seeking to bring more of a situational emphasis to its methodology. The primary aim of the basic courses in all fourteen centers is to give the students a practical, functional command of general American English, emphasizing speaking and listening skills.

Although some centers have special English classes for children, most participants in the English courses at the binational centers are high school and university students, young professionals, and working people for whom the learning of English is important for pursuing higher studies or for obtaining better paying positions.

As the chart shows, the centers offer varying courses and programs aimed at training teachers of English as a second language. Most of them hold annual seminars of several days or one or two weeks in duration for interested institute and local teachers. These consist mainly of lectures and workshop sessions concerning methodology and other aspects of importance in the teaching of English as a second language. These seminars have made a distinctively positive contribution toward the upgrading of English teaching in Mexico.

Thus, the binational centers have gradually become the focal points

in their communities for the training of English teachers--in addition to the few higher normal schools of the Ministry of Public Education. The U.S.I.S. works through the centers to help support the annual seminars, the ongoing in-service workshops, and the library facilities specially adapted for English teachers. Films on English teaching are provided by the U.S.I.S., which also presents full-length movies in English occasionally at the Mexican Association of Teachers of English meetings held at the centers.

During in-service English teacher training sessions and annual seminars the U.S.I.S. occasionally sends lecturers who join with local experts in seeking to help teachers learn to adapt the basic textbooks in going beyond repetitive and mechanical drills and to develop a more creative and lively form of teaching. Most of the teachers at the centers are among the best in their respective communities and, although in certain cases less than half of them may be native speakers of English, they often surpass the latter in their ability to teach English as a second language.

Some unique achievements of particular binational centers are worthy of note. The Mexican American Cultural Institute at Chihuahua, for example, has been acknowledged by the University of Chihuahua to the extent that its students receive university credit for English courses taken at the Institute. The center at Monclova is in charge of the English courses offered at the local university and maintains a branch in Ciudad Frontera. The Guadalajara institute is helping to establish the English courses at the Universidad de Guadalajara. Regular special English classes are taught by the Monterrey center teachers to over three hundred school girls at the Instituto Mater, a privately owned school in the community.

The achievements of the Mexican American Cultural Institute in Mexico City are especially noteworthy and are fully described in the following section.

II. THE MEXICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE OF MEXICO CITY

The Institution

The Mexican American Cultural Institute (Instituto Mexicano Norteamericano de Relaciones Culturales, Hamburgo 115, Mexico 6, D.F.) is the oldest and largest binational cultural center in Mexico. It offers the most important English teaching program for adults in the country as well as serving as a model throughout the Americas.

Although the Institute is a non-profit, private independent organization, governed by a local board of directors, composed of ten Mexicans and ten Americans it receives the cooperation of the U.S. Government through the U.S. Information Service. Also, the U.S. Embassy has set up an annual scholarship fund to help needy students study English at the Institute. It is dedicated to promoting a better understanding between the peoples of Mexico and the United States of America by means of a cultural interchange program (art exhibits, concerts and recitals, lectures, movies, folk dance classes, guitar instruction, and excursions) as well as through its courses in both Spanish and English. Its chief activity, however, is the teaching of American English as a foreign language to adolescent and adult Mexicans.

In 1947 the Mexican American Cultural Institute was established as the first binational center founded in Mexico, having evolved from an English teaching program begun in 1942 at the Benjamin Franklin Library. Since then it has steadily grown until its English program has reached its present size with a total enrollment of approximately ten thousand men and women students each session taught by fifty-four locally hired teachers. The Institute is now self supporting, the chief sources of income being tuition fees and textbook sales.

(tuition ranging from 200 to 400 pesos per seven-week session, depending on the number of class hours per week)

The board of directors appoints an Executive Director to administer and coordinate all the activities of the Institute and also a Director of Courses who supervises the academic program consisting of English, Spanish, and language teacher training courses.

English Program

The entire series of English courses offered by the Mexican American Cultural Institute is divided into three phases, as follows:

I. Basic Courses

Courses 1 through 9. Upon completion of these, the Institute Diploma is awarded.

II. Advanced Courses

A. Conversation on Contemporary Culture. Upon completion of this course, a certificate is awarded.

B. Advanced English Study: Courses I, II, and III. Advanced grammar and introduction to American Literature. Upon completion of these, a diploma is awarded.

III. Teacher's English

A. TE-1: The Sound System of American English. Pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm, plus the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet for English phonemics.

B. TE-2: The Structure of English

Language learning and teaching, history of

the English language, and characteristics of English structure.

C. TE-3: Methodology of Teaching English.

Modern techniques of the oral approach, lesson planning, teaching of grammar, pronunciation, reading, writing, and conversation. Adaptation of teaching materials. Upon completion of these, a diploma is awarded.

Beginning in 1970, in order to provide greater flexibility, the schedule of courses was revised to include two types or "plans" of seven week terms or sessions, as follows:

Plan A -- 50 minutes daily, Monday through Friday. This covers one regular course (or book) each session, at a tuition of $200 pesos ($16.00 dollars) per session. The nine Basic Courses are completed in approximately two years, and the Institute Diploma is awarded.

Plan B -- 110 minutes daily, Monday through Friday. This covers two regular courses (or books) each session at a tuition of $400 pesos ($32.00 dollars) per session. Eight Basic Courses are completed in approximately eight months, and a certificate is awarded. The Institute Diploma is awarded upon completion of the ninth course according to Plan A or upon recommendation of the teacher and the passing of an oral examination.

Each course has been carefully developed and is based on a textbook published by the Institute itself and on a syllabus and guidelines established by the Director of Courses. Teachers follow these with no appreciable variation in order to maintain proper continuity throughout the program. Each teacher, however, may present the prescribed material as he deems best for his particular group of students.

Entrance requirements for the regular English courses are minimal. No particular educational background is required. Students must be fourteen years of age or older, adolescents (of fourteen through seventeen) generally being placed in separate classes. Students are admitted to courses higher than the first one on the basis of results of an aural/oral, and in some cases written, placement test or upon completion of lower courses at the Institute.

The attendance policy permits no more than an established maximum number of absences, representing about one quarter of a given course. Three late arrivals are equivalent to one absence.

In addition to this regular on-going program, the Institute sponsors annual "summer institutes" lasting one week or longer for Mexican teachers of English as a second or foreign language who desire to expand their knowledge of linguistic considerations and methodology of teaching English to Spanish speakers. These special seminars are often granted partial financial support by the U.S. Information Service.

Aims

The primary goal of the English program at the Mexican American Cultural Institute is to teach students to speak and understand spoken American English. The Basic Courses (1 through 9) are fashioned to meet this goal. The student who completes them and thereby receives the Institute Diploma is expected to have acquired an acceptable pronunciation of "General American" English and to be able to understand and speak it when conversing with Americans. Secondary considerations are the ability to read and write the oral English patterns learned and to understand the vocabulary items included in them.

The advanced courses are aimed to increase the student's proficiency in conversation and offer him features of advanced grammar and an introduction to American literature.

The three courses of English for teachers are designed to help beginning or experienced teachers of English as a foreign or second language to deepen their understanding of the English sound system and structure and to increase their knowledge of the methodology of teaching English--particularly the methods and techniques used at the Institute itself.

Methods

The general approach of English instruction at the Mexican American Cultural Institute has been carefully developed and has been named "The Oral Approach." It is applied most specifically in the nine Basic Courses and incorporates most of the principles and techniques of the audio-lingual approach growing out of the concepts developed by Professors Charles C. Fries and Robert Lado at the University of Michigan English Language Institute in the 1940's and 1950's. These principles and techniques are clearly set forth in a booklet first published in 1964 by the Mexican American Cultural Institute, The Oral Approach to English Teaching by Kenneth W. Johnson, one of the Institute teachers. This publication sets forth the basic principles and assumptions of the Oral Approach and then describes the specific techniques used at the Mexican American Cultural Institute. The two major techniques, found to be the most effective, are choral repetition and substitution drills. Other techniques, used less frequently, are transformation drills, questions and answers, filling blanks, dialogs, word studies, and brief readings and conversations.

Special pronunciation drills are incorporated in all the Basic

Courses, but more frequently in the first three. At least five minutes per class are dedicated specifically to pronunciation. Reading is largely restricted to the patterns themselves introduced in the Basic Courses. Occasionally brief paragraphs dealing with life in the United States are provided. Word studies are presented in every sixth lesson beginning with Basic Course 3. Writing is taught gradually, beginning with copying exercises and moving toward dictation and answering questions or performing transformation drills at more advanced levels.

Grammar as such is not emphasized at first. It is taught indirectly through the use of frames and patterns. Dialog and pattern translations are provided in Basic Courses 1, 2, and 3, but translation exercises as such are not used. Some teachers occasionally ask the students to memorize brief dialogs.

With respect to homework, the syllabus recommends that teachers assign written homework at least once or twice a week. In addition, students are urged to study their lessons regularly outside of the class periods. The written assignments usually consist of five or ten items based on material already covered in class, beginning largely with copying and working gradually toward more originality at higher levels. Students are also encouraged to practice outside of class with native speakers and tapes and records, to attend movies and plays, to listen to radio programs, and to try to read newspapers, all in English.

The Institute has a 24-booth language laboratory which is used on an optional basis for the first Basic Course only. Records based on lessons recently dealt with in class are played for students who missed class or who desire review.

Additional optional opportunities for hearing spoken English are

provided by occasional lectures and films offered at the Institute. Conversation clubs are open to students of Basic Course 5 or above on Thursday evenings for one hour and twenty minutes and offer an informal opportunity for conversational practice. These usually consist of five or six students with one American teacher or other native speaker of English. The fee is low: twenty-five pesos (two dollars) for three months.

The Institute library is open throughout most of the day and evening (8-12 and 3-9 p.m.) and contains books and magazines in English for browsing or study. It is also a quiet place where students may study or write homework assignments.

Textbooks and Other Materials

One of the unique features of the Mexican American Cultural Institute is that it publishes a full set of its own textbooks used in all levels as determined by the Director of Courses. Students are required to purchase their textbooks at the Institute at fifteen pesos ($1.20 dollars) each. These are the following:

I. Basic Courses

American English Course, Books 1 - 9, each designed for thirty-six hours of classroom instruction. The books were originally published in 1957-1958, having been written by a group of seven collaborators: Jack M. Morris, James P. Carter, Kenneth W. Johnson, Jane Griswold, Patricia Crouse Bredee, Guillermo L. Castelazo, and Norman A. Glass, most of whom were Institute teachers. In 1959-1960 they were revised and modified by Jack M. Morris, James P. Carter, and Victoria S. de Cisneros (Books 1-7) and by James P. Carter and Jane Griswold (Books 8 and 9). The creation of this series was originally supervised by the late Francis C. St. John, former

Executive Director, and Mrs. Gloria Wasielewski Kreisher, former Director of Courses of the Institute.

These nine books constitute the core of the Institute's English program, an integrated series beginning with material suitable for a student having no previous knowledge of English and gradually preparing him to be able to take the Advanced Courses. The books are accompanied by The Oral Approach to English Teaching, step-by-step guides to the nine textbooks, placement examinations, general examinations, supplementary record albums, and suggested class schedules. The series was developed specifically for Latin American Spanish speakers, fourteen years of age and above. It was carefully researched and pre-taught before being published.

II. Advanced Courses

Advanced English Study, Books 1 - 3, each designed for 36 hours of classroom instruction. These books were published in 1962 and were written by Patricia Fent Ross, an Institute teacher. Each book is organized into twenty alternating chapters of structure or advanced grammar study and reading selections from North American literature. The books are accompanied by a Teacher's Handbook, examinations, and suggested class schedules.

III. Teacher's English

A. Teacher's English One (TE-1). This course uses Clifford H. Prator's Manual of American English Pronunciation (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1957).

B. Teacher's English Two (TE-2). The Institute has published its own textbook for this course: Spoken American English for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (1967) written primarily by James P. Carter. This book deals with the evolution of language and language teaching, a brief history of the English language, and an introduction to English structure

patterns.

C. Teacher's English Three (TE-3). The Institute has also published its own textbook for this course: Techniques and Methodology of English Teaching for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (1967) written primarily by James P. Carter. The contents are divided into three main areas: structure pattern teaching techniques, lesson planning and classroom teaching, and materials and their adaptation.

The textbooks written and published by the Mexican American Cultural Institute were originally intended for use by the Institute alone. They were prepared for the special needs of the Institute, emphasizing modern spoken American English and providing a complete, integrated, and graded series from beginning to advanced levels. They were better adapted to the situation of the Institute than any other existing series of English textbooks for Spanish speakers. When word of their existence and success soon began to spread to other binational centers in Mexico and in other Latin American countries, the materials were made available for wide distribution. Today they are used in all fourteen of the Mexican American binational centers in Mexico and in most of the binational centers throughout the Spanish speaking part of Latin America. They are also sold to private teachers, private schools, universities, language institutes, vocational schools, police academies, military schools, and other organizations in Mexico and in other countries of the Western Hemisphere.

Because of the growing international demand for the Institute textbooks, it was necessary at the end of 1968 to make minor changes in the nine Basic Course books, consisting mainly of elimination of local references and Spanish translations familiar only to Mexicans. Certain technical details were also improved and the format of the books was modernized at no increase

in price.

A survey was recently conducted to obtain suggestions for improvement of the textbooks. General satisfaction was expressed, the principal indication being that perhaps the pattern drills contained in the lessons would be more effective if they were more closely related to contextual situations. The Institute is now planning for a group of collaborators to undertake another revision of the books to improve them possibly along these suggested lines while retaining those features which have proved to be successful in the classroom--especially the abundance of drills and the closely integrated nature of the series.

As regards other teaching materials employed at the Institute, the blackboard is the most important. Largely at the discretion of the individual teacher, visual aids, usually in the form of pictures, are used to some extent. Voice of America tapes dealing with life in the United States are played in the Conversation on Contemporary Culture course.

Testing and Grading

Regarding evaluative testing, the Director of Courses has established a routine for the Basic and Advanced Courses. There are two major examinations in each course: a mid-term examination and a final examination. These are standardized examinations, three sets of each alternated each session, distributed and controlled through the office of the Director of Courses. Aural and writing abilities are both tested. For the most part the teacher presents a cue or question orally and the student writes the corresponding response. Quizzes and brief tests may be drawn up by the teachers on their own initiative or based on suggested tests which are made available. It is recommended that these be given at quarterly periods within each session.

The lowest passing grade on examinations and in the various courses is 80%. The final course grade is a dual one, evaluating the student separately as to his audio-lingual ability and his reading-writing ability. To pass a course, a student must not fall below 80% in either grade. There are no make-up or extraordinary examinations in Basic Courses 1 through 8. Each teacher determines final grades according to his own judgment based on an overall evaluation of the students' abilities.

Statistics compiled in recent years reveal that fifteen or twenty per cent of the students drop out before completing a course although more tend to finish the higher level courses. A student may take a course four times. Between one quarter and one third of the students completing Basic Course 1 fail it. The percentage of failures tends to diminish in the higher level courses.

Students

The total number of students attending English classes at the Mexican American Cultural Institute averages approximately ten thousand per session. Of these about sixty per cent are women. Some ten per cent are adolescents between fourteen and seventeen years of age, who are usually placed in separate classes. The large majority of the students are Mexicans, many of whom have had little or no previous instruction in English. Many are white-collar employees seeking better jobs. However, the occupations of the students range widely from taxi drivers to physicians.

The average class size is about twenty-five students. The Director of Courses has established class size limits as follows: thirty-two for Basic Courses 1-4; twenty-seven for Basic Courses 5-7; twenty-five for Basic Course 8; and twenty for all other courses.

The students generally have a highly favorable attitude toward learning English. Most of them come to the Institute on their own initiative and are anxious to improve their knowledge of English for personal, cultural, or economic reasons. Some subsequently obtain salary raises and promotions in their work. Some who take advanced and teacher's English courses become teachers in private and even in public schools, where the demand for well-trained teachers is acute.

Since the large majority of the students are mature, serious individuals, there are few, if any, problems of classroom discipline.

Teachers

The teachers employed at the Mexican American Cultural Institute constitute one of the best trained and experienced and most highly paid faculties in Mexico. Of the fifty-four English teachers, twelve are men and forty-two are women. The large majority are native speakers; the remainder have a near-native American English pronunciation. Approximately eighty-five per cent are American citizens.

Mexico City has a relatively large population of American residents, which helps the Institute find native American teachers to serve on its permanent staff.

The qualifications desired in an Institute English teacher are: an American B.A. degree, some teaching experience, a working knowledge of Spanish, and a non-paid training period (usually two months) in residence.

The large majority of the teachers have met these qualifications. Some teachers have Master's Degrees in linguistics or in teaching English as a second language. Full-time teachers participate in annual in-service training programs usually held for one week each January. A few of them belong to

professional organizations for English teachers in the United States and Mexico.

The average number of teaching hours (fifty-minute periods) per week per teacher is twenty-five. A maximum limit of thirty and a minimum of twelve have been set. In addition to classroom teaching, all teachers assist with registration procedures; a few have special duties, such as assisting with curriculum development, materials improvement, and coordination of examinations.

A few of the most bilingual teachers teach Spanish as well as English classes. A very few teach in other schools or offer private lessons.

The teachers are hired by the Director of Courses in consultation with the Executive Director. The salaries range from 41.90 pesos (3.35 dollars) per teaching hour (fifty-minute class) to 58.13 pesos (4.65 dollars). The financing of the teachers' salaries is provided almost exclusively by student tuitions. The teachers receive numerous fringe benefits: full pay twelve months a year plus one month's extra pay at the end of the year, paid vacations (six weeks a year), paid sick leave, medical insurance, life insurance, retirement pension, and required membership in the Mexican Social Security Institute, which offers similar and additional benefits. A sabbatical leave of eighteen weeks is also offered about every ten years.

The promotion system at the Institute is based on a point system which includes considerations of background, training, and seniority. The teachers belong to a locally formed union including Institute teachers and employees, which serves as a channel for bargaining with the Institute administration.

The teachers have all been trained to use the "Oral Approach" and the Institute textbooks which incorporate it. Many have had years of experience, several having been employed at the Institute at the time the books were being written and put to the trial.

* * *

In conclusion, it has been noted that in terms of its enrollment the Mexican American Cultural Institute in Mexico City is the largest institution in Mexico which dedicates itself primarily to English teaching. Furthermore, in terms of its successful program and textbook series it is one of the most influential English teaching organizations in the world, serving as a model for other binational centers and educational institutions throughout Mexico and Latin America.

III. THE ANGLO-MEXICAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

The Institution

The Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute (Instituto Anglo-Mexicano de Cultura, Maestro Antonio Caso 127, Mexico 4, D.F.) is the principal institution in Mexico dedicated primarily to the teaching of British English. It has a smaller branch in the southern part of Mexico City (Empresa 165, Mixcoac 19, D.F.), and another in the second largest city of Mexico, Guadalajara (Lerdo de Tejada 75, Sector Juarez).

The Institute is a non-profit, private, and independent organization, governed by a locally elected board of directors composed of eleven Mexicans and eleven British citizens. Its primary purpose is to strengthen and further cultural relations between Mexico and Great Britain. It receives the cooperation of the government of Great Britain through the British Council, whose local offices are situated on the second floor of the Institute's main building. Both the British Council and the Institute collaborate in the presentation of an extensive program of cultural activities such as exhibitions, lectures, films, theatrical productions, concerts, and recitals. The principal activity of the Institute, however, is the extensive, high-quality program of English courses offered to Mexican children, adolescents, and adults.

The Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute began its functions in 1944 primarily upon the initiative of the British Council with the cooperation of local supporters. Gradually the Council has separated itself organizationally from the Institute, but, as from the beginning, it continues to pay the salaries of the Institute Director and to furnish minor subsidies. It has equipped the Institute with a sixteen-booth language laboratory and provides a subsidy for its maintenance. Occasionally the Council sends visiting lec-

turers to the Institute; it also awards one annual scholarship for a Mexican English language teacher to study in Great Britain. The British Council also provides films for teacher training and lends broad support to the cultural program, three-quarters of which is offered in English. Despite the welcome support of the British Council, the Institute is actually an independent local organization; its English language program being largely supported by tuition fees (three hundred pesos or twenty-four dollars per fifteen-week semester with a ten percent discount for full payment in advance).

Since 1944, the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute has continually grown in size. In January, 1966, a branch institute was opened in southern Mexico City. Three years later it had grown so large that it was moved, in August, 1969, to a larger building in the suburb of Mixcoac. In September, 1966, a branch in Guadalajara was established; it occupied a larger building in September, 1967, and is still growing; new classrooms are being added and a library is being formed. English class enrollments for the first semester of 1969-70 were as follows:

Main Institute	--	4,231
Mixcoac Branch	--	2,420
Guadalajara Branch	--	1,604
Total	--	8,255

Of these, approximately twenty-five percent were children between the ages of ten and fifteen.

The Institute plans to expand gradually in the capital and in other Mexican cities as it is able to find and train teachers and rent or build appropriate premises.

English Program

The English courses offered by the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute include a six-level series for children of ages ten to fifteen and an eight-and-a-half-year series for adolescents and adults divided into a "Basic Cycle" (six one-semester courses comprising three years), "Advanced Courses" (four one-semester courses comprising two years), and Higher Courses (varied courses comprising three and one half years) organized as follows:

Children's Courses (six one-semester courses)

C-I, C-II, C-III, C-IV, C-V, C-VI

I. Basic Cycle (six one-semester courses; three years; 270 class periods of fifty-minutes each; A -- first semester; B -- second semester)

I-A, I-B, II-A, II-B, III-A, and III-B.

Upon completion of these, an Intermediate Certificate of English is awarded by the Institute to those passing a written and oral examination.

II. Advanced Courses (four one-semester courses; two years; 180 class periods of fifty-minutes each)

IV - A and IV - B

V - The entire fifth year is devoted to preparation for the Cambridge University "Lower Certificate in English."

III. Higher and Specialized Courses

VI - Sixth Year: Advanced English and Literary Studies

VII - Seventh Year: Preparation for the "Certificate of Proficiency in English" of Cambridge University

VIII - Eighth Year: A one-and-a-half-year course in preparation for the "Diploma of English Studies" of Cambridge University.

Specialized Courses:

Literature

Translation

Conversation

British Life and Institutions

VI. Teachers Training Course

A two-semester course for holders of the "Lower Certificate in English" or the equivalent who have adequate command of spoken English and who desire to learn to teach English according to the methods used at the Institute. Those who complete this course satisfactorily are awarded a "Certificate of Proficiency in the Teaching of English."

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An "ordinary course" consists of three fifty-minute periods or two seventy-five-minute periods per week for one seventeen-week semester. An "intensive course" consists of five sixty-minute periods per week for one seventeen-week semester - permitting a student to complete the equivalent of two ordinary courses in one semester.

Each course has been carefully designed by the Institute Director and the Director of Studies. Teachers adhere closely to the established syllabuses and guidelines in order to maintain proper continuity and standards.

No special educational background is required for admission to classes. Students aged ten to fifteen attend the special children's courses; those sixteen and above attend the regular courses. A placement test is administered to all entering students who are not beginners in order to determine the level at which they should initiate their English studies at the Institute.

An announced policy on attendance requires that students miss no more than twenty per cent of their classes. However, students who are able to do the required work and meet the required standards are given credit, except in the case of the Teacher Training Course in which steady practice is considered essential.

In addition to the regular two-semester program, the Institute conducts special intensive courses during the summer and occasional brief seminars for English teachers.

Aims

The English program of the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute has as its principal goal the teaching of the four language skills with particular emphasis on listening and speaking at the beginning. Standard British English is emphasized throughout as well as a general understanding of British life and institutions. The advanced and higher courses encourage students to prepare themselves to pass the necessary examinations for obtaining the Cambridge University documents: The Lower Certificate in English, the Certificate of Proficiency in English, and the Diploma of English Studies. In a sense, the Institute offers the highest quality English language program in Mexico. Probably in no other institutions in the country, including the universities, may a Mexican find the opportunity to attain such a high level of English proficiency.

The teachers training courses are open to well qualified persons of all nationalities. Graduates may be offered teaching positions at the Institute.

Methods

The prevailing approach to English teaching at the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute is based on a modified direct method with continuous strong emphasis on situational or contextual presentations. Techniques for the development of all four language skills are employed throughout the program; aural-oral skills are given greater emphasis at the beginning levels. The attempt is made at all times to keep presentation and practice utterances and sentence patterns in close relationship to a given realistic situation drawn either from the student's own daily-life experiences or from a situation presented in the textbook reflecting British contemporary living and culture.

A variety of techniques are employed in the classroom including choral repetition, individual repetition, pattern drills, dialogs, and questions and answers. The Institute strives to avoid purely manipulative drills (e.g. transformations from affirmative to negative, and the like) in its belief that all language activities should be meaningful and related, whenever possible, to a given realistic context. Basic sentences are combined and flexibility is encouraged so students may proceed beyond a set dialogue to meaningful communication as soon as possible.

Pronunciation is taught primarily through imitation. Some simple explanations of tongue positions, aspiration, and other phonetic features are offered. Minimal pairs are occasionally presented at the beginning, but words and phrases used for pronunciation practice are generally related to real objects and situations.

Grammatical explanations, as such, are limited. When students, especially adults, seem to need them the teacher attempts to clarify the points in question as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Vocabulary is taught in context, usually without reference to equivalents in Spanish. In the basic courses an active vocabulary of approxi-

mately two thousand words is developed. The passive vocabulary is expanded through the use of reading selections. Simplified reading selections are used at lower levels. Later, unmodified literary works are introduced. From the fourth year on, the reading and analysis of various genres and periods of British literature gradually increases.

Writing is introduced gradually. Brief written exercises are assigned throughout the basic courses. Limited dictation is used--primarily for practicing and testing. Writing practice and assignments increase at the higher levels.

Homework assignments are relatively simple in the beginning courses. Students are expected to study their lessons outside of the classroom for approximately one half hour per class period and, as a general rule, there is one written exercise assigned each week. Students are encouraged to study and practice each lesson to reconfirm what they have learned in class. If possible, they may listen to appropriate tapes at home or in the laboratory.

The sixteen-booth fully equipped language laboratory of the Institute is available to students mostly for practice and remedial work. Students work on their own; the monitor intervenes only to help them overcome pronunciation difficulties.

Students are encouraged to seek opportunities to practice using English outside of class as much as possible. The Institute itself offers a varied and interesting cultural program largely in English in the form of lectures, films, plays, and exhibitions.

A wing of the main Institute classroom building contains a spacious library, opened in 1968. The shelves hold 20,000 volumes in English, and the library subscribes to approximately 110 periodicals on a wide variety of subjects. The British Council provides most of the books and periodicals, the

vast majority of which are published in Great Britain. The library is open during convenient hours. Students are encouraged to make use of the library and its quiet reading room.

Textbooks and Other Materials

Most of the textbooks used at the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute are available for purchase at the nearby British Bookstore and its branch in the southern sector of the city. The Institute has published a set of basic lesson books sold at the Institute itself. These are considered provisional and are currently being revised by staff members.

The new series is undergoing a process of initial drafting, being put to the practical test in selected classes, and final revision prior to publication.

Each student must obtain his own textbooks.

The following is the list of textbooks presently required in the various courses:

Children's Courses

In all the children's courses, general lesson booklets published by the Institute are required. These are currently being re-evaluated with a view to extensive revision. In addition to these, a series of graded readers are required:

C-II: Detectives from Scotland Yard; Stage 1;
(Longmans Structural Readers)

C-III: Send for the Police by Norman Wymer
(Present Day English Reader; C-2;
University of London Press)

C-IV: Stories of Detection and Mystery
(Longmans Simplified English Series)

C-V: The Kon Tiki Expedition by Thor Hyerdahl
(The Bridge Series)

Basic Cycle Courses

Basic Textbooks

I-A, I-B, and II-A: Present Day English for Foreign Students, Book I, by E.F. Candlin (University of London Press, 1968)

II-B, III-A, and III-B: Present Day English for Foreign Students, Book II, by E.F. Candlin (University of London Press, 1968)

Readers

I-B: One Winter Night
(Present Day English Reader; A-I; University of London Press)

II-A: The Dream by Norman Wymer
(Present Day English Reader; A-2; University of London Press)

II-B: Send for the Police by Norman Wymer
(Present Day English Reader; C-2;
University of London Press)

III-A: A Traveller's Cheque and Other Stories by G. C. Thornley
(Pleasant Books in Easy English; Stage 4; Longmans)

III-B: True or Not?
(Pleasant Books in Easy English; Stage 4; Longmans)

Advanced Courses

Basic Textbooks

IV-A and IV-B: A Situational Course for Intermediate Students of English by Colin White (Instituto Anglo-Mexicano de Cultura, 1968)

V (Lower Certificate in English): Developing Skills by L. G. Alexander (Longmans)

VI: Fluency in English by L. G. Alexander (Longmans)

Readers

IV-A: A Book of Shorter Stories (Longmans Simplified English Series)

IV-B: Flying Colours by C. S. Forester (Longmans Simplified English Series)

British and American Short Stories (Longmans Simplified English Series)

V (Lower Certificate in English): Black Narcissus by Rumer Godden (Heinemann)

VII (Certificate of Proficiency in English): A Passage to India by E. M. Forster

Hamlet by William Shakespeare (The New Shakespeare Hamlet; Cambridge University Press)

(The latter three books change each year.)

Teachers Course

Various outstanding books, in the field of teaching English as a foreign language, both British and American, are used. These are available either in the main Institute library or in the reference libraries located in certain staff offices.

The institute staff is preparing new basic textbooks to be adopted eventually at nearly all levels in an attempt to overcome weaknesses noted in the textbooks presently used in seeking a better adjustment to the actual needs of the students in the Institute classes. A special desire is to heighten interest and make the situations more lively while maintaining structural soundness.

In addition to textbooks, other teaching materials and aids are employed. The blackboard is frequently used; charts, pictures, films, and film strips occasionally reinforce situational contexts. The flannelboard and real objects are also sometimes employed especially in the children's classes.

Testing and Grading

Standardized examinations drawn up by the Institute staff are administered at the end of each semester throughout the courses of the Basic Cycle and the Advanced Courses. The minimum passing course grade is seventy per cent. Upon completion of the basic three years a student may take a locally prepared written and oral examination. If he passes it, he receives an Intermediate Certificate of English.

Subsequently, students are encouraged to prepare themselves in fifth, sixth, and seventh year courses to take the three examinations in English as a foreign language sponsored by the University of Cambridge and given throughout the world in June and December. In Mexico these are administered exclusively by the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute under the supervision of the British Council. The examination papers are sent from Cambridge and are returned there for evaluation. All three include both written and oral portions. If the examinations are passed, the certificates awarded, accord-

ing to level of difficulty, are: the Lower Certificate in English, the Certificate of Proficiency in English, and the Diploma of English Studies. In one recent year, of a total of 140 students, 120 received the Lower Certificate; of a total of twenty-five, nineteen earned the Certificate of Proficiency in English; and of a total of seven, three received the Diploma of English Studies. Not all candidates for these certificates are prepared by the Institute; some of them are students from private schools which emphasize British English.

The Institute does not permit make-up or extraordinary examinations in its regular program. A student failing his final examination must repeat the course. It has been estimated that approximately twenty per cent of the students fail their courses, the rate being noticeably higher at the lower levels.

Students

The approximate total number of students participating at one time in the English program of the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute (all three branches) is 8,200. Of these about fifty-five per cent are women or girls. Some twenty-five percent of all students are youngsters between the ages of ten and fifteen. Most students are Mexicans, whose only previous instruction in English, if any, was that received in public secondary schools.

The average class size is approximately twenty students. The maximum class limit is thirty enrollees; this usually settles to about twenty-five in the children's and basic courses.

With the possible exception of some children who are being urged to attend classes by their parents, the students have a highly favorable attitude toward learning English. The motivations for preferring the Anglo-

Mexican Cultural Institute to other English-teaching institutions seem to be related to convenience of location, favorable reports from friends or relatives who have found satisfaction in the English program, and what may be termed "snob" or "political" appeal of the English of Great Britain in contrast to the English of the United States.

Teachers

The Institute employes a total of sixty-two teachers at its two branches in Mexico City. A minority of these teach at both branches. Sixty-five per cent of the teachers are women; thirty-seven per cent are native English speakers. Most of the teachers are Mexicans who learned English in British schools in Mexico or at the Institute itself. Some have lived and have attended schools in Great Britain. Most of the Mexican teachers do not have a native-like pronunciation of English.

Not all Institute teachers have attained the high standards desired by the directors. The minimum requirement is that a teacher hold at least the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English and, preferably, the Certificate of Proficiency in the Teaching of English issued upon satisfactory completion of the Teachers Training Course offered by the Institute.

Above this minimum requirement it is desired that the teacher have a good command of English himself, that he demonstrate good contact or rapport with students, and that he know how to present the material through the use of effective techniques.

Teachers are encouraged to participate in annual training seminars in which visiting specialists from England occasionally participate as teachers and lecturers. A few of the best teachers belong to professional organizations for English teachers, such as the Association of Teachers of

English as a Foreign Language in Great Britain and the Mexican Association of Teachers of English in Mexico.

Some teachers are employed for full time, teaching from fifteen to twenty exact hours per week (i.e., up to twenty-four fifty-minute periods per week); most teach an average ranging from five to eighteen fifty-minute classes per week.

Teachers are hired by the Director of Studies in consultation with the Institute Director. Salaries range from 40.65 pesos (3.25 dollars) to 49.55 pesos (3.95 dollars) per exact hour of teaching. Although some additional payments are made to advanced teachers, there is no general "extra month's" bonus at the end of the year. Salaries are financed by student tuition fees alone. By Mexican law the teachers are required to be affiliated with the Mexican Social Security Institute, which guarantees medical, retirement, and other benefits. The teachers do not belong to a local union.

* * *

In conclusion, the Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute may be said to be the one institution in Mexico offering the opportunity for students to attain the highest level of English proficiency in all four language skills as well as familiarity with British institutions, life, and literature. The influence of its successful program extends to the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the National Polytechnic Institute, the Higher Normal School, and the National Preparatory Schools, many of whose leading English professors and teachers have been trained at the Institute and who make use of and recommend the textbooks and methods employed there. Furthermore, the Institute cooperates with the National Polytechnic Institute in the presentation of a series of English lessons by public television.

SUMMARY

In overall summary, the extensive and intensive English as a second language courses of the fourteen American-Mexican and three British-Mexican binational centers are among the most successful programs of their type in Latin America. These seventeen institutes offer English courses directly to a total of approximately thirty thousand adolescent and adult Spanish-speaking students at widely distributed locations throughout the Mexican republic.

The British courses with their "situational approach" and the American courses with their "oral pattern drill approach" offer an interesting balance of complementary methodologies reflecting currents in foreign language teaching prevailing in the United States and Great Britain appropriately adapted to the Spanish-speaking learner. Their generally strong impact on English as a second language teaching in Mexico may be attributed largely to the high standards which they have set and to the exemplary programs which they have demonstrated to be successful. The Anglo-Mexican institutes, aiming toward the three Cambridge University examinations and certificates, for example, have brought English teaching probably to the highest academic level in Mexico. The American nine-book series has served as a model for the majority of American binational centers throughout Spanish America.

In numerous instances the binational institutes have become the focal points in their respective communities for the training of English teachers--in addition to that offered by the few Higher Normal Schools of the Ministry of Public Education. At these centers lecturers from the United States and Great Britain join with local experts to help teachers

learn to adapt basic textbooks and to develop a creative form of teaching with a firm applied linguistic basis. Frequently they also emphasize the cultural aspects of the English-speaking peoples of the world.

The influence of these successful English and teacher-training programs of the binational institutes extends to the English departments of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the National Polytechnic Institute, the Higher Normal Schools, and the preparatory schools as well as to many other institutions and organizations, both public and private, which offer English language instruction.

In short, the extensive English as a second language programs of the seventeen American and British binational institutes have exerted a pronounced and noteworthy influence throughout Mexico and even beyond its borders into major portions of the Western Hemisphere.